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VINDICATIONS

OF THE

Christian Verity:

As the same is professed, preached and experienced, by the People upon whom the present Age hath imposed the Name of **METHODISTS.**

By *J O H N G R E E N*, Clergyman. *K*

Every one that doeth Evil hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doth Truth cometh to the Light, that his Deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. John iii. 20, 21.

Mihi antiquitas Jesus Christus. IGNATIUS.—Quid illis cum virtutibus, qui Dei virtutem, Christum ignorant? LACTANTIUS.

P A R T I.



L O N D O N:

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As the same is proved, preached and
experienced by the People upon whom it
is present Ago hath



By JOHN V. G. R. E. N. G. I. S. T. A. N. C. E.

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PART I.

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T H E P R E F A C E.

Since it hath pleased the God and Father of mercies, to reveal in me his Son from heaven,* and count me worthy of the ministry of his blessed Gospel; through his free and sovereign Grace, 'tis my constant desire not to walk in craftiness, or deceitfully handle the word of God, for filthy lucre; but to renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, and by plain, open manifestation of the Truth, in speaking, writing, preaching, to commend myself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

Hence it is, that I have not shunned publicly and privately, morning and evening, on week-days and Lord's-days, according to the ability which God giveth, to declare the whole counsel of God.—Hence it is, that I have not refused with Professors, Heretics and Infidels, openly, or secretly to reason concerning the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.—Hence it is, (for my God hath never failed) that I have been always ready to give an answer to any that have asked me a reason of the hope that is in me, and that I trust, with some degree of meekness, boldness and godly fear.

Some of the following vindications of Truth, were originally wrote, in answer to those, who called upon me from the public papers, to give an account of my conduct and doctrine; and at different times were conveyed unto the pub-

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* See my Book, intituled *Grace and Truth*.

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lic through that channel: and as by the blessing of God, they were kindly received by christians of different denominations, I was willing also to have imparted the rest after the same manner; but by two editors, have been given to understand, there is no more room in their papers for CHRISTIANUS.

However, since I cannot plead the cause of Truth before the public, as I was willing, I may, to use the Poet's expression, come unto them, quo licet illo pede; and as the part not heretofore published, contains a defence of the most important and soul interesting Truths, I hope, that also, together with the rest, may, by the divine Blessing, prove acceptable and useful to the church of God: Of which, Reader, should'st thou be one, ascribe all the glory, all the praise to the Father of Lights, from whom, through the Son of his Love, every good and perfect gift doth come; and without whom, we have no light, no love, no heaven.

Whatsoever, therefore, is amiss in this, or any of my other writings, is mine; may the Lord discover, pardon, and destroy it: Whatsoever is right, is His; to him alone I dedicate it; may he accept, defend, and spread it.

And now, my dear Reader, unto Him also, and the word of his Grace I commend thee; and that he may so help me in writing, and thee in reading, that error may be detected, Truth manifested, and Himself alone glorified, is the hearty Prayer of him, who is, for Christ's sake.

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Thy willing Servant,

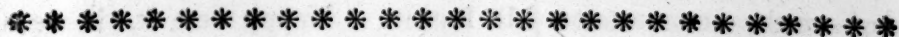
JOHN GREEN.



VINDICATIONS

OF THE

Christian Verity, &c.



To the Author of the London Chronicle.

London, Dec. 29, 1759.

LETTER I.

SIR,

PERMIT a Clergyman to congratulate you upon your being almost brought to the period of another year, to thank you for the pains you have taken to oblige, at least the rational part of your readers, and to wish the Chronicle deserved success, not only in the ensuing, but also for many succeeding years.

Such a salutation, tho' not to you, may seem strange to some even serious Christians: a *tender*, but *misinformed* Conscience, may cry; 'Oh! Impiety! a Clergyman read news-papers! For the sake therefore of such weak, but perhaps honest brethren, give me leave, thro' the channel of your paper, to inform them, That a *Clergyman* is one who is *allotted* of God to minister in holy things; to be, as it were, a mouth from God to the people, and from the people to God: he is sometimes called *Parson* (a corruption, I take it, of *Person*) because he *personates* the people to God, in confessing to him their sins, and in praying for their several wants and necessities, as well as because he exhibits the people to themselves in the glass of the word of God: in short, a Clergyman is one whose commission runs, *Preach the Gospel to every Creature*; and whose duty enjoins him to pray for himself, his flock, his nation, and all mankind. Now, Sir, if this be the case, let me ask those scrupulous, not to say over-wise and over-righteous Gentlemen, How shall a Clergyman, with Daniel, confess and bewail the

the sins of Princes and People; with Jeremy, lament the calamities of war; with Paul and the Primitive Christians, make proper intercessions for kings, and all in authority; or, in a word, with Prophets, Apostles, Confessors, bless and praise their God for the success of his Truth upon earth, if they have no intelligence; and consequently know nothing at all of the matter. And if some intelligence be necessary, by what means can it be had, at a quicker, easier, cheaper rate, than thro' the channel of a good news-paper? Not that all are so, but such a one I take that to be, whereinto the author is determined to admit nothing contrary to humanity, virtue, loyalty, piety, christianity; such a one I hope the Chronicle is, and will be whilst it enjoys its present author: and shall conclude this part of my letter with the words of our pious and worthy commentator, Mr. Burkitt, 'Happy were it, if we all 'enquired after news, not as *Athenians*, but as *Christians*! that we 'might know the better how to manage our prayers and praises for 'the Church and Nation.'

I have been led into these reflections by a sight of another news-paper, which a friend of mine favour'd me with on Saturday last, at the same time I was perusing the Chronicle. Who the author is I know not: but if there be any truth in the Latin adage, *Artis est celare artem*; in plain English one might say, the very title proclaims he is no Conjuror: however, letting that pass, and admitting that in his own way he may be a pretty *crafty* Gentleman, I do assure you, Mr. Chronicle, that the very first page manifests his *Craft* to be of that kind which our Church, in her excellent Liturgy, teaches all her members to deprecate; for, after he hath entertained his readers a little with an account of plays and players, having exalted one, kick'd down several, and kill'd all the Dramatic Writers, as it were, with a dash of his pen.—(had he stopp'd here, as little damage would, I believe, have been sustained, either by the Church or State, you wou'd not have had the trouble of this; but) flush'd, Sir, with conquest, in a cowardly, but *crafty* manner, he next proceeds to attack the great truths of religion, and to defame the ministers of Jesus Christ.—First, then, he begins with condemning Popery: Why so? There's *Craft* you know in that; because now let him write what he will, his ignorant readers must take it to be right true protestantism. In firm confidence, as it were, of this, he next musters his cowardly *Craft* against the Churches of England and Scotland conjointly. First, by declaiming against, and misrepresenting their common, but apostolic doctrine of Predestination.—That this is their common doctrine, whosoever reads the 17th Article of the Church of England, and the Assembly's Catechism, must confess; and that 'tis Apostolic, the Epistles

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of the Apostle Paul abundantly testify. But the Gentleman perhaps hath never read them. Give me leave, then, for once to quote him a passage from the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, Chap. i. 5. *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of Children by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will.* 'Oh! but says our *Craftsman*, this doctrine 'is now in a manner given up, by the sect that formerly so strenuously maintained it.' What! by our Sister Church of Scotland? Pray, Sir, in *what manner*! Hath she changed her Catechisms? recanted her confessions? and forsaken her antient Faith? If she hath, When? Where? How? 'Twould be worth the Gentleman's while to let us know: The Apostacy of our Sister Church would be fine sport for his companions, and he may be assured no agreeable news to us. 'Oh! (says he) it is a most comfortable thing, and excludes the necessity of 'Good Works.' What! comfortable and yet exclude the necessity of Good Works! Nay, verily, then I think it could be comfortable to none but Rakes, Infidels, and Libertines; but the Gentleman may be assured that our excellent Church doth not, in her 17th Article, call this doctrine comfortable, because it excludes the necessity of Good Works, but because to them, who feel in themselves (to use her own expression) the working of the Spirit of Christ, this doctrine effectually secures both Works and Glory also.

But next the Gentleman tells us, 'That some, in *lieu* of this rigid doctrine, have took up with Regeneration, or the New-Birth, and 'the assurance of Grace and Eternal Salvation.' As the *crafty* Gentleman doth not tell us who these are, it may be something difficult to find them out: however, if there be any such, I can assure him that they are no sound members of the Church of England; for she is so far from taking up one of these doctrines in *lieu* of another, that she piously, orthodoxly, and, in a manner truly apostolic, sweetly holds them all. In the Article before quoted, she holds the doctrine of Predestination; in the Collect for this very week she holds Regeneration; and in her Communion Office she very plainly tells us, that they who duly and worthily communicate, dwell in Christ, and Christ in them, and are *assured* of God's favour and good-will towards them. These then are the apostolic doctrines of our excellent Church, and if the Gentleman himself be not born again, I pray God that he shortly may, for he that is the faithful and true witness hath declar'd, and that with a Verily, verily, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.*

But to return; I must not forget to acquaint you with that which led him into all this, and to point out unto you, the very *primum mobile* of all this paper rage and rebounding fury. He tells us, 'That it

was

‘ was a pretty, little, and well executed print, he got a sight of some days ago, representing a christian soldier completely armed.’ What! little, pretty, well executed? Why then should such a small, pretty, well executed thing stir up the rage of such a mighty hero? I esteem it no small advantage, that I have some acquaintance with the author, and can assure him, that as the print is pretty, and well executed, so also it was by him well intended. This the *Cassiman* can by no means allow, and that for the following reasons. First he tells us, ‘ That it is given, if he is not misinformed, to those who are come to the highest pitch of assurance.’ So far from that, Sir, it hath been given to many who never pretended to have any assurance at all; and it was intended to be given to any, who are willing to take unto them the panoply divine thereby represented, in order to fight against our three grand enemies, the world, and flesh, and devil. Secondly he tells us, ‘ The name of the person so assured is wrote over it, and underneath, the name of the blind guide.’ This Sir, is a greater blunder still; neither the name of any person come to the highest pitch of assurance, nor the name of any blind guide, nor the name of any minister of the Gospel real or pretended, was ever by the author’s hand, command, permission, or knowledge, written upon the print at all. As the gentleman hath told us, that he hath had a sight of the print, I will not say that he hath no eyes: but this I think is very plain, poor unhappy gentleman, he hath the misfortune to be led at least by *one blind guide*. Thirdly he tells us, ‘ That ’tis signed as a ticket or passport for heaven.’ Oh! brave! How the gradation rises? rather than the climax of blunders should be incomplete he seems to stick at nothing. So far, Sir, are they who use that ticket, from thinking it a passport for heaven, that they esteem both that and all things, but loss, dross, dung, in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord: yea, this is their testimony, *Whoever hath the Son of God* (whatsoever else he hath not) *hath life, but whoever hath not the Son of God*, (whatsoever else he hath) *hath not life, but, as yet, the wrath of God abideth on him*.—When things are at their utmost height, then we say they must have a fall; the gentleman therefore, having finished his towering blundering climax, sinks down as it were in a moment, into a feigned fit of Charity; ‘ wishing they may all get to heaven, tho’ he doth not chuse to ask the way of any of them.’ Marvellous conclusion! What! wish they may all get to heaven, and yet neither ask their way, nor tell them his? The Latins say, *Oh si! Oh si! otiosi*. The English, wishers and woulders are bad householders; and I am afraid his is but a mere idle wish, However, though he doth

doth not chuse to ask of any of them the way to heaven, they are quite willing (as an evidence that they *heartily* wish him there) to shew him their way without asking, if he will lend them his eyes or ears, and if he approve it not, they are willing to hear concerning his *way*; and one of them, who is well persuaded that he is in the *true way*, and the *true way* in him, is ready through the *way* to reason with him concerning the difference of their ways; not merely under the covert of a fictitious name, with pen, ink, and paper, but *viva voce*, face to face, fairly, plainly, openly, for the real and not counterfeit *Eusebius*, the true worshipper, and he who is really in the true way, is not ashamed thereof. I am, Mr, *Chronicler*, his hearty well-wisher, and your humble Servant,

CHRISTIANUS:

N. B. No answer was returned from the Gentleman who wrote the Craftsman, to the preceeding letter, inserted in the Chronicle of Jan. 1, 1760. But a gentleman in the Chronicle of Feb. 23. who subscribed N. N. made some exceptions to the following passage; "A clergyman, is one whose commission runs, preach the Gospel to every creature:" An answer to which you have in the following letter inserted in the Chronicle, of May 24 and 27, 1760.

LETTER II.

To the Editor of the Chronicle.

SIR,

AS Mr. N. N. in the Chronicle of Feb. 23. observes that he is the only gentleman who hath taken any notice of my letter inserted Jan. 1. and since he hath earnestly entreated me, seriously to weigh and consider what he hath wrote; upon what *he* thinks an exceptionable passage therein: I make no doubt but your usual candour, and well-known impartiality, will again permit a clergyman to answer for himself; by suffering him, through the channel of your paper, to present the public with a few observations upon the reflections made by Mr. N. N. and at the same time to assure him, that it is the love of Christ, and *compassion to the souls of men*, which constrains me thus publicly to declare, wherein I cannot submit to his judgment: *And may that God,*

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who in the apostolic and every age, hath taught the hearts of his faithful people, by the sending to them the light of his Holy Spirit; grant that by the same Spirit, we may have a right judgment in all things, and evermore rejoice in his holy Comforts, through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour.

And now to return; the passage upon which Mr. N. N. has made his remarks is this, "A clergyman is one whose commission runs, *'preach the Gospel to every creature.'*" These words, saith Mr. N. N. "Are indeed, part of the general commission which our Saviour gave to his apostles, but can by no means be applied to clergymen in general."—That this commission, was in an extraordinary manner given to the Apostles, I readily grant; but that it was confined to them I can by no means allow: because if we consider it, as recorded by the Evangelists, we find that our Saviour not only gives a commission, but also adds a gracious promise; *'And lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,'* Matt. xxviii. 10. As the commission and promise are inseparably connected, if Mr. N. N. restrict the commission to the twelve apostles, it is plain he must also restrict the promise, and then he is reduced to this dilemma, either the twelve apostles are yet in the world, or the world hath long since been brought to its final period. No wise man, I suppose, will affirm either the one or the other, and consequently a clergyman, even in the present age, is one whose commission runs, *'Preach the Gospel to every creature.'*

The passage disputed being fully proved, I might now be excused from following Mr. N. N. any further; but lest he should yet be too wise, by the help of my God, *veniam quocunque vocarit*, I will follow him step by step, and weigh the remaining part of what he hath wrote.

And first, saith that Gentleman, "All clergymen are not apostles." The chusing of Matthias, into the place of Judas, by the *Κληρος*, or Lot, gave rise, I take it, to the name of clergyman, so that it is plain the first clergyman was an-apostle; and though it be granted, that no clergyman in the present age, is in the fullest sense of the word an-apostle, yet I suppose it will be easily allowed, every true clergyman is one who is allotted, moved, sent, not merely of men, but of God, to preach the Gospel: in this sense, and for this end therefore, he is, in his measure, an apostle, or sent of God; and consequently that part of the apostolic commission which respects preaching, since, as is already proved, it is not confined to the apostles, must also belong to him.

However, "Private clergymen were never intrusted with such a commission."—The great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, when interrogated concerning his doctrine, saith, *In secret I have said nothing,*

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John xviii. 20. and in a charge which he hath given to his clergy, *What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light, and what ye hear in the ear that preach upon the house tops*, Matt. x. 27. In obedience to which charge, *they went out and preached that men should repent*, Mark vi. 12. yea we read, *that daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ*, Acts v. 42.—Hence it is, that we find Stephen the Deacon, and the Proto-Martyr, wisely and boldly preaching to the Libertines, Cyrenians, Alexandrians, to them of Cilicia, and of Asia, as well as to the Jewish Sanhedrim, the word of his God.—Hence it is, that we find, Acts viii. his brother Deacon Philip also, to the Eunuch, to the people of Samaria of Azotus, and of all the cities till he came to Cæsarea, preaching successfully the same word of truth.—Hence it is, that we find the Elders and Apostles, even not thinking it beneath their dignity, in a house,—in a school,—in a prison,—by the sea-side,—as well as in the Synagogues and Temple, to preach the Gospel of the kingdom of God. In a word, hence it is we find that our blessed Redeemer's clergy being scattered abroad, they went every where preaching the word (Acts viii. 4.) so that we see his clergy, howsoever in other respects distinguished, were all public clergymen; and the term, *a private clergyman* being found quite unscriptural, it may be a little difficult to comprehend its meaning. However, let us try: If by private clergymen, Mr. N. N. should mean those who *privately* seek to buy a great living, with a little duty; and at the same time, a very *private* curate, to perform it for very little money: those when they vouchsafe to appear in a pulpit, in a cold sleepy manner, read over a dry lecture of dead morality; and even there are so *private*, that should an unprejudiced stranger be one of their auditory, he might more justly conclude from such ethnic harangues, that they were the followers of Plato, Cicero, or Seneca, than the preachers or disciples of Jesus Christ. If he should mean those private gentlemen who are often found disguised in lay habits, at routs, plays, balls, horse-races, and such-like assemblies: or those of a lower class, who are often found even gaming and tipling in private ale-houses: If the gentleman should mean such, whom our blessed Saviour and his apostles have foretold should be in these last times (Matt. xxiv. 24. Jude 18, &c.) and in various parts of the New Testament, are thus described; *False prophets, —ravening wolves, —evil workers, —despisers of those that are good, —traitors, heady, —high-minded, —earthly, —sensual, —deceitful, —murmurers, —complainers, —scoffers, —boasters, —having not the Spirit of God:* or in a word, if Mr. N. N. should mean all those *private* gentlemen, who hate the light because their deeds are evil; I have no objection to his asser-

tion; such private clergymen, I also believe, were never intrusted with such a commission.

But if Mr. N. N. should mean those clergymen, who, though they are not dignified with *rich* livings, or distinguished with *pompous* titles; yet have the word of Christ dwelling *richly* in them, and are *ministers*, not merely of the letter which killeth, but of the spirit which quickeneth: If he should mean those who neither have, expect, or desire such honour, as *my Lord, his Grace, his Eminency, his Holiness*; but yet can truly say that Jesus is their *Lord and God*, are *eminent* in the *gifts and graces* of his blessed Spirit, and are perfecting *holiness* in the fear of God: If, I say, the Gentleman should mean such *private* clergymen as these, I must beg leave to tell him, herein I am not of his judgment, I cannot find in all the Bible, but these (though they should be as poor as the apostle Peter when he said, *Silver and gold have I none*, or be found with the apostle Paul ministering to their own necessities by their manual labours) have as extensive a commission to preach as the most wealthy Prelate: because they can truly say, that word of reconciliation, *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*; God hath not only committed unto us, but also (*Θεμενος εν ημιν*) 2 Cor. v. 19. *put in us*, and woe unto us if we preach not! But what need many words, in so clear a case; *Bishops, Arch-bishops, Cardinals*, and even the *Pope* himself, decide it in our favour; their constant uniform, well-known conduct proclaims as it were with a *noverint universi*, 'we are quite willing that the poorer clergy should preach as often, and as much as we.'

The principles advanced by Mr. N. N. being now considered, weighed, and found wanting; Christ strengthening, we shall also consider his reasoning. Whilst (saith he) the apostles remained together at 'Jerusalem, they managed the affairs of the church conjointly; but upon their separation and dispersion, their powers were divided.'—How far, or in what sense this may be true or false, with respect to the *temporal* affairs of the Church, I am not at present called upon to consider: the point under consideration is the *preaching* of the everlasting Gospel. And *that* I am bold to say, neither was nor is, under the management of man or men, but under the sole direction of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, through the powerful influences of his blessed Spirit. 'Tis he who gives to his apostles and ministers not only a general commission, but also appoints their particular labours, and manages them in their respective stations. 'Twas he who chose Paul (*Acts ix.*) to bear his name before the *Gentiles*, and *Kings*, and the *children of Israel*. 'Twas he who (*Acts xiii. 2.*) said, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.*' So they being
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sent forth by the Holy Ghost, before they were sent by the church or apostles, departed into Seleucia. 'Twas he who said to the apostle Peter, *What God hath cleansed, call not thou common;* and to the deacon Philip, *Go near and join thyself to this chariot.* 'Twas he who sent the one to preach the Gospel to Cornelius, and his gentile friends: and the other to the Æthiopian Eunuch, to the people of Samaria, Azotus, and other cities, and gave each to fulfil this his respective and particular mission; before the rest, or if you please, the college of apostles, were even acquainted with it: and so far was even the most prejudiced and legal part of the church at Jerusalem, from assuming to themselves Christ's prerogative, that when they heard Peter declare the manner of his mission, and the effect thereof, we read, *that they held their peace and glorified God,* Acts xi. 18. And not only so; but 'twas he who sometimes even contradicted the wisdom, and withstood the will of the apostles; so that we read, he not only commanded Peter to go to Cornelius, contrary to his own will, and that of other circumcised christians, (*Acts xi. 2.*) but also (*Acts xvi.*) forbade Paul and Timothy (at that time) to preach the word in Asia: and afterwards when they assayed (*ἐπείρασεν* *conabantur*, *tentabant*, endeavoured or attempted) to go into Bithynia, the Spirit suffered them not.

Having now fully proved, that the whole college of apostles conjointly, did not manage the preaching of the Gospel: I think it will follow as a necessary consequence, that no particular apostle was intrusted with such authority. However, let us consider, what Mr. N. N. hath to offer upon this head. 'St. Paul (saith he) having converted the Corinthians, 'claims an authority over them, above all other teachers whatever.' (1 Cor. iv. 15.) What authority? doth he enjoin them to hear no one preach but himself, or such whom he shall depute? Nay, verily, he tells them, *That whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, all are yours,* (1 Cor. iii. 22.) and though Timothy might be deputed by him, it is plain that Apollos was not: for we find (*Acts xviii.*) that he was born at Alexandria, a city of Ægypt in Africa; far from Tarsus, a city of Cilicia in Asia Minor; and that knowing only the baptism of John, at that time, he must be unknown not only by Paul, but by all the apostles; but being thus far instructed in the way of the Lord, in the absence and after the departure of Paul, he came to Ephesus; and being fervent in spirit, mighty in the scriptures, and an eloquent man, without any deputation from Paul, he spake and taught diligently in private, and began to speak boldly in the Synagogue, the things of the Lord; whom when Aquila and Priscilla, Paul's companions, friends, and fellow labourers, had heard, so far were they from despising or rejecting the gift

gift of God which was in him, because he was not more deeply acquainted with the mysteries of the kingdom of God, that *having heard him, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly*; and not only they received him, but, *when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, in which region Corinth was, the brethren wrote conjointly, exhorting the disciples to receive him, who when he was come, he helped them much who had believed through grace*; so that here is a plain undeniable instance, of a preacher of the Gospel, who hitherto was neither managed, nor directed, either by a 'particular apostle, or the whole college of apostles conjointly.'

Moreover, notwithstanding the apostle Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians, reproves the Bigots and Schismatics on both sides, yet he finds no fault with Apollos, for preaching: but acknowledges the gifts and grace of God, that was in him, by declaring him, as well as himself, to be '*a minister of Christ, by whom the Corinthians believed*;' (1 Cor. ii. 5.) and so far was he from thinking, that he was not in the *true way*, or the *true way* in him, because he preached without a deputation from him, that I am persuaded he could wish with Moses on a like occasion, *that all the Lord's people were prophets*, (Numb. xi. 29.) or could say with a greater than Moses, *he that is not against us is for us*. (Luke ix. 50.) Nay, doth not he himself plainly tell us (Phil. i. 14-) *many of the brethren in the Lord waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear; some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will. The one preach Christ of contention not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the Gospel. What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therefore do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.*

Since then the apostle Paul tells the Corinthians, that all the ministers of Christ are theirs, since he informs them (1 Cor. xii. 4-) *that though they have diversities of gifts, yet it is the same Spirit, who hath given them for the perfecting of the saints, for the edification of the body of Christ*. (Eph. iv. 12.) Since therefore he permits them to enjoy, not only the wisdom of a Paul, but also the plainness of a Cephas, and eloquence of Apollos; since he even rejoices because Christ is preached, whether in pretence or truth, 'tis clear to a demonstration, that the apostle claims no such lordship over their faith, as to forbid them to hear any minister of Christ, because not deputed by him. What then is the authority which the apostle claims over the Corinthians, above all other teachers whatsoever? for an answer to this question, Mr. N. N. refers us to, (1 Cor. iv. 15-) *though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ,*

yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel. Just so could Philip the deacon have said to the Eunuch, to the believers at Azotus, or to any other church, which in a ministerial sense, was planted by him. Just so may any minister of Christ even now, say to those, who have under his ministry been awakened out of the sleep of nature, and savingly brought to Jesus Christ, where-soever they were born, bred, or dwell; and not only so, but to an assembly of this kind, I readily allow he may so speak, as no other human teacher can whatsoever. Since he hath begotten them in Christ Jesus through the Gospel, he may therefore, *exhort them to be followers of him as he is of Christ*; he may, with peculiar authority, reprove whatsoever is disorderly amongst them; he may visit the disobedient with a rod, and command the rest to have no fellowship with them. In a word, he may say, *If I be not an apostle unto others, doubtless I am to you, for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.* But at the same time, that he can declare, that they have not many fathers, he will readily with the apostle grant, that they may have many instructors.

Having now considered what Mr. N. N. hath advanced from scripture, and I think clearly shewn that it doth not at all answer his purpose; I am next to follow him into the vast and perplexing wilderness of human traditions, in order to weigh what he hath dug from thence. And here he tells us ‘As to preaching in particular, it was in the first place the office of the Bishops, and commonly discharged by them; and whenever Presbyters were entrusted with it, it was still (as Mr. Bingham hath proved) but a grant of the Bishops; and Presbyters did it by their authority and commission, and whenever Bishops saw just reason to forbid them, they had power to limit or withdraw their commission.’ As to the office of preaching, I think it is now pretty plain that it is not very commonly discharged by Bishops, and will Mr. N. N. suppose, that they all do not understand ecclesiastical antiquities as well as Mr. Bingham? Or will he imagine, that so strenuous an asserter of episcopal power and authority, ever intended to reprehend so many right reverend and most reverend Fathers? No man sufficiently acquainted with the character of Mr. Bingham and his writings, will, I believe, dare to assert it. Besides, doth he not in the very book and chapter quoted by Mr. N. N. introduce St. Jerom, asking this question? “What is it that a Bishop does more than a Presbyter, setting aside the business of ordination?” And at the same time, doth not he tell us, that St. Chrysostom speaks to the same purpose when he says, “Bishops are superior to them only in the power of ordination, “ and

“and have that one thing more than they.” If they have only that one thing more than they, then it is plain, that a Presbyter, *as such*, hath a power to preach as extensive as that of a Bishop, and is not occasionally entrusted therewith; consequently Mr. N. N. must either have misrepresented Mr. Bingham, or Mr. Bingham must have contradicted himself. If the former be true, Mr. Bingham’s testimony is clearly for us: if the latter, and he should be found equally to prove both sides of the question, then his authority is here equal to nothing; and in this case at least, not worth the citing. ‘But however, had not the bishops power to limit or withdraw the commission of Presbyters whenever they saw just reason?’ If the Presbyters only had a commission from man, it is more than probable, the bishops might see just reason to limit or withdraw their commission, and also might have power so to do; but if their commission was really from God as well as from man, if they not only had common gifts, but were clean, through the word of Christ spoken to them; and had the word of reconciliation dwelling in their hearts; then I am firmly persuaded, the bishops could see no just reason to limit or withdraw it, “Because the gifts and callings of God (with respect to the elect) are without repentance.” But if they should endeavour to limit or forbid their preaching without a just reason, then with Peter and John they might boldly say, *Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*

But now with Mr. N. N. to come nearer to our own times. In the form of ordering of deacons he tells us we are taught “That it appertaineth to the office of a deacon to preach, if he be admitted thereto by the bishop. And therefore without the bishop’s licence he has no commission to preach at all.” Here again, I must beg leave to tell Mr. N. N. I cannot submit to his judgment. For 1st, A true minister of Christ, be he called a deacon, priest, or presbyter, hath a commission to preach, before the bishop and elders give him any at all; a commission so necessary that without it all others are nothing worth; and therefore as a previous question, the bishop asks, *Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this office and ministration, to serve God for the promoting of his glory, and the edifying of his people?* This commission given him by the chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls, as we have already proved, extends to every man: and agreeable to this commission, the desire of every true minister of Christ is consistent with the pious and catholic prayers of our Church in the Ember Weeks; as much as possible lieth in him both by his

his "life and doctrine to set forward the salvation of all men." 2dly, After prayer and supplication made by the Church, and due examination and imposition of hands by the Bishop and Elders, the examiners having found no reason to believe that the examined is not *inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost*, to minister unto the people in the name of Jesus, or to doubt the truth of his commission from God, the Bishop gives him his *Letters of Orders*, upon the exhibition whereof, with the consent of the settled preacher, he hath also the Bishop's authority to preach to any congregation in his diocese, as Mr. N. N. may learn from the 50th canon. 3dly, If the person ordained have a call to *settle* in any particular congregation, then the Bishop gives him his *Letters of Licence*; hereby he is impowered not only as a settled preacher to officiate, but also to demand his annual salary, which in his letters of licence is always particularly specified. Hence then, it appears; that the Church of England is not of such a poor narrow contracted spirit, as Mr. N. N. would make us believe; she doth not, as that gentleman affirms, expressly limit the commission of a Gospel preacher only to one congregation, she believes that his commission extends to all; otherwise how could she pray in faith, that by life and doctrine he may *set forward the salvation of all*. She doth not, as Mr. N. N. supposes, impower her Bishops to prevent, hinder, restrict or limit any minister of Christ, in preaching the everlasting Gospel. But she, as it were, charges them as much as in them lieth, to allow, encourage, exhort, help them, to be "instant in "season and out of season, to warn every man, by their life, preaching, writing;" or, in short, to make full proof of their ministry." And not only so; but if the examinant and examiners cannot agree; if the one saith, he believes he is inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, and the others believe he is not; or if a minister of Christ cannot conscientiously subscribe the articles and terms proposed; our mild and gentle *Legislature*, not willing to tyrannize over the faith, or wound the conscience of the one or the other, in such a case hath wisely *provided*, on the one hand, not cruelly to compel her bishops or presbyters to lay hands upon any whom they esteem improper persons: but, on the other hand, considering the fallibility of men, and that not only elders and bishops, but even general councils, (Art. 21.) and churches, (Art. 19.) may err; and knowing, that if any *counsel or work* be only of man, it will come to nought, but if it be of God, that it cannot possibly be overthrown: lest therefore they should haply be found to fight against God, if the examinant or minister can produce or exhibit a sufficient number of witnesses who believe he

is sent of God, to this office and ministry, then by virtue of the act of toleration, a licence is granted him, whereby, in his ministry of the everlasting Gospel, he is intitled to the protection of the civil power.

But, however, saith Mr. N. N. 'The priest ordained, hath made a solemn promise, by the help of God, to submit to the *godly* judgments of his ordinary, and other chief ministers.' And to which I answer, true; but not to their *ungodly* judgments: and if any should say, who must be judge, which judgment is *godly*, and which *ungodly*? I reply with the church, Article 20th, the written word of God: "It is not lawful, saith she, for any one to ordain any thing contrary thereto; neither may any one so expound one place of scripture, that it be repugnant to another." Agreeable to that of St. Paul, *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works.* (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.) But if one should say, how shall I rightly understand the scripture? I answer; *If any man lack wisdom, let him humbly, but confidently ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not.* (James i.) But what if I have asked again and again, and yet think I am more ignorant, stupid, vile than ever? Then it is plain to me, the Giver of Wisdom hath already heard thy prayer: *Eccælo descendit γνῶσις σαυτὸν*, know thyself comes down from heaven; continue then to ask, seek, knock; thou callest upon God, call also upon Jesus who is made unto us *Wisdom*, he shall send thee the promised comforter the Holy Spirit of Truth, whereby thou shalt behold wonderful things out of his law, and be filled with Righteousness, Peace and Joy.—"But is there not a spirit of enthusiasm, error, delusion, as well as the Holy Spirit of God? How shall I distinguish?" Just as thou wilt distinguish the *godly* and *ungodly* judgments of men, to the law and to the testimony, if they abide not that bar there is no light in them; believe not every spirit, but try the spirits by the touchstone of God's written word, particularly by the marks laid down by the beloved and loving apostle *John* in his first epistle, *hereby thou wilt know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.* But do not wicked men, and even the devil himself sometimes quote, and cover themselves with scripture? What then? "The sheep* should not cast away their skin because wolves sometimes hide themselves in it." No! rather let us cry so much the more unto God, through the Son of his Love, that in the light and power of his blessed Spirit, with this mighty

* *Augustine de sermon. dem in monte.*

mighty, sharp two edged sword, we may be able to hew afunder the snares of men or devils, by demonstrating out of the scriptures, the things concerning themselves. Of this sword, we may say (as David did of Goliath's) there is none like it. With this confessors, martyrs, prophets, apostles, and even the great Captain of our Salvation himself, have fought and more than conquered. So that the godly resolution of that sweet singer in our Israel, the divinely witty Mr. Herbert, well becomes every christian.

Not ev'n a word or look,
Will I approve or own;
But by the model of thy book,
Thy sacred book alone.

And should the judgment or admonition of any *chief minister, ordinary, bishop or arch-bishop* be plainly repugnant to the word of God, we are not enjoined by the church to submit or obey, but on the contrary, the true Head of the church hath taught us, to call no man on earth Rabbi, *for one is our master, even Christ, and all we are brethren.*

The principle and reasoning of Mr. N. N. being, I think, sufficiently proved erroneous, let us take a short view of some of the dire effects which must necessarily follow upon a supposition that he herein was right and I mistaken.—Supposing then, with that gentleman, that a clergyman is not in the *true way or the true way in him*, because that he believes his commission runs, *preach the Gospel to every creature*, and thereby, contrary to the *declared will* of his bishop: preaches to any who are willing to hear; wheresoever a door is open, must not this prove,

First, That our sister church of Scotland, and all our Protestant dissenting brethren, are all to a man out of the true way? For did not their ancestors shake off obedience to the *declared will* of their bishops? And so far are they their posterity from being reform'd herein, that they acknowledge obedience to no human bishop at all. And for this, (*horresco referens*) according to Mr. N. N's. terrible principle, Mr. Knox, Wishart, Welch, Rollock, Flavel, &c. &c. all glorious luminaries of the church, as well as all who tread in their steps, are damned.

Secondly, Must not Mr. N. N's. principle prove, that all our pious reformers in king Edward's days, and glorious Martyrs in queen Mary's, *were all out of the true way*? For did not they all knowingly, willingly, and resolutely disobey the *declared will* of their bishop of Rome. And for this, according to Mr. N. N's horrible reasoning, honest Latimer, pious Hooper, and humble Bradford, with all their

companions are also damn'd. But this destructive principle stops not here. For,

Thirdly, Since we, their children, continue in the same disobedience, *we are all out of the true way*, and according to Mr. N. N's popish and uncharitable way of reasoning, our deacons, priests, bishops, arch-bishops, commons, lords, and even George our dear and gracious King, not forgetting or excluding Mr. N. N. himself (if of the established church) are all in the same dangerous way of damnation.—But I am weary of viewing the dismal consequences which follow from such an absurd and uncharitable error. A word or two to Mr. N. N. and I have done.

And now, sir, according to your earnest intreaty, I have, I hope, through divine assistance, seriously weighed and considered, the reflections you thought proper to lay before me; and to every unprejudic'd and unbiass'd reader, I think they must appear unreasonable, antisciptural, and uncharitable. Not, sir, that I suppose you thought them such at the time you wrote them, it is more than possible that you imagin'd at least, as you yourself inform us, that they were wrote with a *well-wishing mind*; for what so deceitful as the heart of man? However, since it hath pleas'd God, by the light of his unerring word, to manifest that they are but a viperous brood; suffer a poor fellow sinner, earnestly to entreat you, for the love of Christ, and in compassion to the souls of men; publicly to revoke, recant, renounce, them; say with Ambrose, *Humanum est errare, sed diabolicum perseverare*; and with Augustine, “*Errare possum, hæreticus esse nolo.*” Or if that impudent thing, commonly called shame, will not suffer this public renunciation, at least for your own sake, and even for shame, be silent, because you will find it hard to kick against the pricks; and even a poor heathen poet can tell you,

Causa patrocínio non bona pejor erit.

I am, Mr. Chronicler, for Christ's sake,

Mr. N. N's. humble servant,

and your constant reader.

CHRISTIANUS.

N. B. No answer appearing to this; for further illustration, I wrote the following, but the Editor for reasons best known to himself, did not chuse to insert it.

LETTER III.

To the Editor of the Chronicle.

Dec. 1760.

SIR,

THE Principles advanced by Mr. N. N. in your paper of *Feb.* 23d, have, I humbly hope, *May* 24th and 27th, met with a proper answer. There, according to the judgment of many, it hath been clearly proved, that a Clergyman's commission to preach is not, as that gentleman imagined, confined within the narrow limits of one particular congregation; but that it *extends to every creature*; and that as much as in him lieth, he is called to *set forward the Salvation of all men.** There it hath been shewn from scripture and reason, that he is not bound *implicitly* to obey the *declared will* of any dignified doctor: But that in Christ Jesus he hath the privilege of bringing man's will to the touch-stone of God's unerring Word, and if it abide not the trial to disregard or withstand it. This, Sir, you know is the Controversy which Christianus, a Clergyman, hath lately been engaged in; this is the cause he (through mercy) hath had the honour to plead before all that read your useful paper. And since it is the cause of God, of Truth, and of Christian Liberty; yea, since it hath been proved to be the cause of our King, our Country, and all Protestants in general; I believe it will not be unacceptable to many of your readers, if, through divine assistance, we yet further illustrate it, by descending to a few particulars.

Let us suppose then (for what hath been, possibly may be,) a chief minister or dignified clergyman thus to bespeak his curate. "I do not, Sir, approve of your preaching this doctrine of original sin,—of salvation by grace,—of spiritual conviction of sin,—of justification by faith,—of imputed righteousness,—of regeneration and sanctification by the spirit,—of assurance of salvation; and such-like puritanical, methodistical doctrines; for hereby you disturb a quiet neighbourhood, fill the Church with canting dissenters and mad enthusiasts, displease my patron, disgust many of my rich parishioners, and, as it were, turn every thing topsy-turvy. My admonition therefore is, that you no longer puzzle the people with such abstruse mysteries,

teries, and extempore effusions; but that you only preach plain morality, as I have done; and then all will be easy and quiet again. Moreover, I will that you keep no company with them who preach, hear, or approve such doctrines, for thereby you disgrace your rector, disoblige your friends, and hinder your own preferment. And lastly take heed that you bring up no new disorderly customs; preach at no time but for about half an hour on Sunday in the forenoon, and in no place but within the consecrated limits of a decent church pulpit. If, Sir, you obey these my admonitions I am still your friend; but if not, then no longer are you my curate."——To such an antiscriptural, and therefore ungodly admonition, I think his curate, quite consistent with the character of a minister of Christ, might in a meek and loving manner thus reply.

In matters indifferent, I may, sir, ought, and am willing to submit to your judgment: but in matters of faith and conscience, I can follow no man further than I am convinced; for at the great day of accounts, I must be judged by mine own conscience and not another's. If you think my conscience be misinformed (as carnal reasons with me are not sufficient motives) shall acknowledge it as a favour, if you will help to rectify, what you think the error of conscience from the written word of God.—But that you offer nothing from thence it is no marvel; because blessed be my God, that impartial and unerring judge, plainly and clearly gives sentence for me. For as to the doctrine of original sin: hath not David informed us, that *we were shapen in sin and conceived in iniquity*? and Paul gives us the reason thereof. *By one man's offence, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.* And again, *By one man sin entered, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*? and doth not our blessed Redeemer teach us; that out of the depraved, corrupt, deceitful, desperately wicked heart of man, proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false-witness, blasphemies? But what need I mention particular scriptures? All scripture given by inspiration of God, is a clear proof of this incontestible doctrine. For if man by nature be not born in sin and a child of darkness; what need of the word to be *a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path*? What need of that sure word of prophecy, to be *as a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and day star arise in our hearts*? So that this doctrine I think may be justly termed, *Articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiae*. And not only scripture, but the disordered natural, as well as moral world, and above all, the man who is so fallen as to deny it, are lamentable, but glaring proofs of undoubted verity.

And

And as to the doctrine of *Salvation by Grace*; it hence follows, that if man be saved at all, it must be as the apostle Paul saith, *not by works of righteousness which we have done*, but by God's free Grace and Mercy: for man once dead in trespasses and sins, is not only indebted, but insolvent, not only ungodly, but stripped of all his strength: And to say to such a one, pay the debt thou hast contracted, and restore to thyself God's image; is just as reasonable as to say to a poor *Felo de se*, true, thou hast slain thyself, but however raise thyself to life again.

As to the doctrine of *spiritual conviction of sin*; I grant, that the manner and measure of this conviction, may be different, but that some degree thereof is necessary, I conceive is a scriptural, as well as a reasonable doctrine; for doth not our Saviour tell us (*John xvi. 8.*) *that the Holy Spirit, when he is come, will reprove, or (ἐλέγξει) convince the world of sin?* Did not Saul of Tarsus experience this conviction, when Christ spake to him, not only with an outward voice, but also with an inward and spiritual power? *Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me?* Infomuch, that now trembling and astonished he called upon Jesus, and by reason of the pangs of this conviction, was three days and three nights not eating or drinking any thing. Did not the trembling goaler also experience this conviction, when he cried out, *Sirs, What must I do to be saved?* And did not the apostles also preach this doctrine of conviction? Hear the apostle Peter charge the Jews at Jerusalem with crucifying the Lord of Life, till being pricked in their hearts they cried out, *Men and brethren what shall we do?* Hear also the apostle Paul, reasoning before the Roman governor, of Righteousness, Temperance and Judgment to come, infomuch that Felix trembled and saith, *For this time go thy way*: Read also his epistles; *The law*, saith he, *is our schoolmaster (εἰς Χριστόν) to Christ:—It is given that the offence might abound:—*It comes to the conscience, that sin may appear what it is, exceeding sinful.—And with respect to his own particular, he tells us (*Rom. vii.*) *That once he was alive*, that is, as he thought, had much wisdom, virtue, strength, *without the law*, that is, without a spiritual knowledge of its spiritual meaning; *but when the commandment*, that is the law, *came*, viz. in its spiritual meaning by the convincing power of God, *sin revived and I died*, that is, my inbred sin appeared, all my imaginary strength and virtue died away. I saw myself to be indeed dead in sin, and obnoxious to the pains of death eternal.—And as this doctrine of conviction, is a scriptural doctrine, so also, upon due consideration, will it be found to be a reasonable and necessary doctrine: For who amongst us will ever think of applying to a physician, or of taking phycic and medicines,

medicines, whilst he thinks he is free from disease? "Therefore to
 "preach (saith Cyprian) unto a man, the grace of Christ, before
 "he is humbled with a sight of his wants, is as mere lost labour as to
 "offer light to a blind man, to speak to a deaf man, or to labour to
 "make a brute beast wise." *Ye say*, saith our Saviour to the Pharisees,
we see, therefore your sin remaineth.—Again, supposing a physician should
 heal us of a dangerous disease, without making us sensible of our
 cure or danger; by such a method, what gratitude could there be ex-
 cited in the patient? or what honour given to the physician? But
 Christ, our spiritual physician, not only heals the sick, but also makes us
 truly sensible of our sickness: so that he having done much for
 us, we have abundant reason to give him his due praise.

And as to the doctrine of *justification*, however abused or misunder-
 stood by the carnal and unawakened part of mankind, such who have
 been taught it in the school of experience by the Holy Ghost, and
 can say (with *Luther*) "In mine heart this one article reigneth, even
 "the faith of Christ, from whom, and unto whom, all my divine stu-
 "dies have recourse to and through continually." These not only
 know and feel that it is a doctrine *full of Godly comfort*, but also so
 hold and expound it, as to shew the use and harmony of all the scrip-
 tures which mention this important point.—Thus when we read (*Rom.*
iii. 24.) that we are *justified freely by God's grace*, hereby we are in-
 structed that the *Fontal*, or first and *impulsive cause* of our justifi-
 cation, is the free grace of God the Father. 'Tis he who *loved us*
with an everlasting love: And therefore, hath he chosen us (before
 time) and drawn us in time unto his Son. (*Jer. xxxi. 3. Eph. i. 4.*)
 It is he, who, according to the good pleasure of his will, hath *predesti-*
nated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. In
 a word, it is he who in the covenant of redemption gave us to the Son,
 promised him that we should have grace and glory, and the God, that
 hath promised before the world began, cannot lie. (*Titus i. 2.*) Oh!
 may we adore his grace, and bless his mercy.—Again, sometimes we
 read, *That by the righteousness of one the free gift is come unto justifica-*
tion of life. (*Rom. v. 18.*) and that *we are justified by his Blood.* (*Rom.*
v. 9.) Hereby we are taught, that the *meritorious cause* of our justifi-
 cation, is the righteousness and death of Jesus Christ, or as our church
 expresses it, (*Art. 11.*) that *we are accounted righteous before God only*
for his merits, who is God-man and every way adequate to the work of
 man's redemption. Yea, he is *very God* begotten from everlasting of
 his Father; and therefore the Son of God, by a filiation peculiar to
 himself: He is the brightness of his Father's glory, the express Image
 of

of his person; his eternal wisdom, his word, and effectual might: All things were made by him, and by him all things consist. Him the church militant and triumphant; angels and arch-angels; cherubim and seraphim, and all the company of heaven, do love, praise, worship. He thought it no robbery to be equal with God, because he is *God over all blessed for ever*. (Rom. ix. 5.) And he is also *very man*: for in the fullness of time, according to the counsel of his Father and the prophecies concerning him, he took upon him our nature: He was made of a woman, made under the law; fulfilled its precepts, and paid its demands; yea, for us was he manifested in the flesh; for us he toil'd, sweat, suffered; for us he was tempted, agonized, bled, died; for us he rose, conquer'd, triumph'd, ascended; and for us the God-man Christ Jesus, is set down at the right hand of power, where he ever lives making intercession for us.

Oh! let us here stop a little, and a while view and admire this amazing mystery, this divine philanthropy! Here let us make a solemn pause, and since all language fails; let expressive silence, and busy contemplation muse the praise of our dear Immanuel.—Here let us adore this goodness, infinite and immense; this stupendous Grace; this mere Mercy; this Love that passeth knowledge; this exact justice; this consummate wisdom; this wonder so divine!—Yea, here let us fall down and own that neither man nor angel can fully comprehend, the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of the love of God in Christ Jesus; the *unsearchable* riches of his Grace in our dear Redeemer.

Oh stupendous Grace! and consummate Wisdom! none but the nature of God offended, could fitly reconcile man to God, none but the nature of man; which had sinned, could so tenderly sympathize with man's infirmities, or *justly* and *properly* suffer for sin. He is the one fit and proper mediator between God and man, because he is well acquainted with the nature of both. He is the one propitiation, every way sufficient for our sins; for as he is very and perfect *God*, he gives an infinite value to the sacrifice; and as he is very and perfect *man*, he could most justly and properly suffer for sin.—As *man*, he had a power to lay down his life, and as *God*, he had a power to take it again. *God* could not suffer or die; man could not satisfy or rise; but what could not God-man? Here, and here only, our God can hold all his glorious Attributes inviolable, and justify believing sinners. In Jesus, Mercy and Truth meet together, Righteousness and Peace kiss each other.

Oh! goodness, infinite and immense! Immanuel dies to satisfy inflexible Truth, and impartial justice; the sinner lives to sing of free Grace, and sovereign Mercy: Sin is punished in the soul and body of Jesus; that the sinner might be intitled to faith, holiness and heaven. *Christ who knew no sin, was made sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him: Yea, in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, (Isa. xlv. 25.) and his righteousness is unto all, and upon all that believe:* So that this is the *meritorious or formal cause* of our justification, it is this which gives *essence* thereto, and entitles us to Grace and Glory. By *which* righteousness, I do not understand his righteousness as he is *merely* God, or that incommunicable holiness of his divine nature, by virtue whereof, he hath a right to equality with his Father, and to glory from all eternity. Neither do I mean his righteousness as he is *merely* man, or that righteousness whereby his *mere* human nature, or the *man* Christ Jesus hath a right to eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of works: but I mean his righteousness as *God-man*; that everlasting righteousness, active and passive, which he as our Mediator, by fulfilling that singular law of a Redeemer; hath perfectly wrought out, and surely brought in. That righteousness he had no need of for himself, and which therefore he might communicate to his brethren, who had none of their own, whereby they could be saved. 'Tis this righteousness which shields the believer from the curse of the law, and defends him from the wrath of God; 'Tis this, and not his own, which the apostle Paul (*Phil. iii. 9.*) desired to be found having on. And (as one justly argues) "If Christ's righteousness be not imputed, 'tis not accepted, if not accepted, 'tis not performed, and if not performed, there is no redemption by Jesus Christ."

Sometimes also, we read Christ *rose again for our justification*: (*Rom. iv. 25.*) Hereby we are taught what some not improperly call the *perfective cause* of our justification: For as by dying in our stead, he bore the curse of the law; so by his rising again, we, as it were, receive our acquittance from the hand of the judge. By his meritorious death and righteousness, he gave full satisfaction to divine justice: By his resurrection, justice published the acceptance thereof, and proclaimed the believer's discharge before men and angels.

Again, sometimes we read that *we are justified by the Spirit of God*: (*1 Cor. vi. 11.*) Hereby we are taught what is the *convincing or revealing cause* of our justification: 'Tis he who makes us truly sensible of our sin and danger; and of God's free Grace and Mercy: 'Tis he who convinces us of our sin, and Christ's righteousness, of Satan's tyranny, and the Redeemer's conquest: 'Tis he who takes of the things which are freely
given,

given, shews them unto us, and works that faith in our hearts, whereby we apply them to our own use and comfort; in a word: 'Tis he who leads us into truth, love, holiness, heaven. And as Luther (writing upon the magnificat) hath well expressed it, "No man can rightly understand God, or the word of God, unless he immediately receive it from the Holy Spirit; neither can any one receive it from the Holy Spirit, except he find it by experience in himself; and in this experience, the Holy Ghost teacheth as in his proper school; out of which school, nothing is taught but meer talk."

Again, sometimes we read that *we are justified by faith*: (Rom. v.) Hereby we are taught, the *instrumental cause* of our justification: This is that precious gift of God through Christ, wrought in the heart of a poor sensible sinner, by the blessed Spirit; whereby the soul apprehends Christ, with all his benefits, as revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, and offered in the everlasting Gospel: This is that sure *trust* and *filial confidence* in God, that through the merits of Christ, our sins are forgiven, whereby we rush into the embrace of God, and cry, Abba Father: This is that divine instrument which lays holds on Christ and his righteousness, wherein the poor sinner stands *rectus in curia*, and whereof doth follow a loving heart, a holy life, a triumphant death, and a never fading crown of eternal glory: This is that heavenly jewel that (*sine qua non*) without which, it is impossible to please God, and without which, none are *actually* justified, sanctified, or glorified; for he who is the faithful and true witness, hath testified, *He that believeth not is condemned already*; (John iii. 18.) *If ye believe not, ye shall die in your sins*; (John viii. 24.) and if ye die in your sins, where I go ye cannot come; (John viii. 21.) This is that shield impenetrable, wherewith the weakest believer shall be able to repel and quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. With this did Bernard fight and conquer, when in the hour of his death, being presented (as he thought) before the Lord's tribunal, and sharply accused by his adversary; he goes out of himself, and runs to Christ: "I grant indeed, saith he, that (as thou objectest) I am unworthy, and by no deeds of mine, can I merit eternal life; yet I know the Lord Jesus hath a double right to the kingdom of heaven; one by heritage, and another by conquest: The first is sufficient for himself, the second for me, *ex cujus dono jure illud mihi vendicans, non confundor.*" But what need I mention any particular christian hero? Herewith prophets, apostles, martyrs; and the holy church throughout all the world, have wrought righteousness, endured hardships, conquered enemies, and received promises: 'Tis this which assents to the

truths of God, though never so improbable; puts us upon duties seemingly unreasonable, and enables to glory in tribulations apparently intolerable: 'Tis this which humbly owns, and joyfully declares; Salvation from the three-fold foe, is not in works, not in faith, not in creatures: But that in the Three-one, God alone, it is sure and everlasting: 'Tis this which gives glory to God, and brings peace unto man, which humbles the sinner, and exalts the Saviour; crying out in the dying language of that glorious martyr and pious bishop Hooper; " Lord I am hell, but thou art heaven; I am a swill and a sink of sin, " but thou art a gracious God, and a merciful Redeemer: The things " impossible with men, with thee are possible!"

Once more; St. James tells us, (chap. ii. 24.) *that a man is justified by works and not by faith only.* Hereby we are taught the *declarative cause* of our justification; and that by good works, our faith is manifested to be, not that poor, dead, fruitless, indigenous plant, standing in nature's garden; but that rich, living, pure, exotic; which is planted and watered by Grace divine. Hereby we may learn, not that St. James contradicts St. Paul, who saith, *By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified in God's sight;* (Rom. iii. 20.) but that they spake to different persons, and therefore of justification in different respects. St. Paul had to do with self-righteous pharisees, or self-exalting legalists, who in whole or in part, went about to establish their own righteousness, as the matter of their justification before God: St. James, with self-conceited Gnostics, and licentious Antinomians, who bragged of mystery, and talked of faith in Christ, but walked like beasts and devils. The one therefore proves that it is faith alone (and that the gift of God) which apprehends that righteousness, whereby we are justified before God; in order to exclude the boasting and eradicate the pride of man: the other, that this faith will produce good works, whereby we are justified before men, and therefore strongly urges their necessity, as evidences of the Truth of faith, in order to stop the mouths of prattling hypocrites, and promote holiness of heart and life. In a word, so far are these two great apostles from disagreeing, that I think they might be justly termed, Christ's two thunderbolts of war against Legality and Antinomianism: For they both clearly prove, that in the business of justification before God, faith and works are separated; but that in the lives of them who are justified, they are indissolubly joined. What therefore, "God hath separated, let not man put together; and what he hath joined, let not man put asunder. Works have no efficiency in our justification before God; but they may, ought, and will have a coexistence in them who are already justified.

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For as a glorious champion of the Lord of hosts, hath well testified, "It is altogether impossible, for true faith not to be employed, about some good thing or other. It doth not stay to ask, whether one ought to do good works? for it hath done them before one can ask, and is continually employed about doing good. He therefore, who is destitute of such good works, is certainly a faithless man, or a downright unbeliever." (Luther in Pref. Germ premissio epistolæ ad Romanos.)

And now to proceed: as to the doctrine of *regeneration*; however metaphorical the expression, or unfashionable the Doctrine, give me leave, sir, to tell you, 'tis a metaphor properly declaring something vastly real and important; a doctrine founded on scripture and the fitness of things; and the various names it receives from the sacred oracles, may help us a little to understand its nature and comprehend its meaning.—Sometimes 'tis called *a new creation*.—Sometimes, *a new birth*.—Sometimes, *a renovation*.—Sometimes, *transformation*. From all which, 'tis evident that *regeneration* is a change of the whole man, a translation from darkness to light, from death to life, from sin to holiness, from the power and kingdom of Satan, to the power of God and the kingdom of his dear Son.—And that we may acknowledge the propriety of this metaphor, it may not be amiss to compare the spiritual birth with the natural, in order to see how aptly the one resembles the other. In the first generation then, we were begotten men, by the will of flesh and blood: In the second, christian men by the will and spirit of God. In the first, our mortal father begat us, that we might survive and succeed him: in the second, our immortal Father, that we might glorify and enjoy him for ever. By the first, we may say, *to corruption, thou art my father; and to the worms, ye are my brethren and sisters*: By the second, we may say to God, *thou art my Father*, and to Christ, *elect angels and saints, ye are my brethren*. In the first, we were conceived and born in sin, and consequently heirs of wrath and damnation; but in the second, *we are the workmanship of God, new creatures in Christ ordained to good works*; and consequently heirs of grace and glory.—Again, the first birth is not effected, without pangs, groans, cries; and sometimes it will appear that the children are come to the birth where there is no strength to bring forth: The second also, is not perfected without sorrow, wrestling, agony: so that the children of God have been made to *water* their couch with tears, to *cry* as out of the belly of hell, to *roar* for the very disquietness of their souls; and sometimes even to give up all hope, and say, in their haste, all men are liars. In
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the first, the stronger the pains, the nearer deliverance; which when it is come; the child cries, friends are glad, and parents rejoice: in the second, the sinner's extremity, is the Saviour's opportunity; and when he is come, his spirit in the heart cries, abba Father, the soul exults, and the church militant and triumphant adore, bless, praise.—The first, after a short time of happy ease and rest, is succeeded by some troublesome after-pains: the second also, after a short time of peace and joy, is generally followed, by some sharp tribulation and perplexing temptation, in which the Lord supports, and out of which he will deliver.

And as the expression is found to be exceeding *proper*, and the thing vastly *real*, so also is it absolutely *necessary* for every one who shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. For that God is just, holy, pure, his works, his word, and the very consciences of men, all declare: but that man by nature is unjust, unholy, and impure, we have already prov'd. Except then man be changed, he can never dwell with him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity: He can never enter where every unclean thing is for ever excluded. No,—As soon shall Christ have concord with Belial, light have fellowship with darkness, and every other contradiction be entirely reconciled.—Again, the happiness which God hath prepared for them that love him; is not as the deluded Mahometans dream, of an earthly, sensual, but of a heavenly, spiritual nature; for which the carnal and unregenerate man hath no taste, no relish, no disposition: so that except he be born again, and endu'd with spiritual senses, he can never delight in those rivers of pleasures which are at God's right hand. No; sooner shall the deaf be charm'd with melodious music, or the blind ravish'd with light and colours; sooner shall the ravenous wild beasts, and the aerial choristers delight to dwell together in the mighty ocean: Yea, sooner shall all the finny race brouse on the tops of mountains, and swim in the liquid æther: than the mere *ψυχικὸς* animal man, understand, receive, love the things of God.—once more; to deny the necessity of this real inward spiritual universal change; is to suppose the redemption of Christ incomplete, and the scripture but a cunningly devised fable: For since man by sin, hath contracted not only a debt to justice, but also a spiritual disease, and moral impurity, which renders him insensible of his danger, and unfit for heaven: A mere pardon would be no more sufficient for him; than it would be for a condemned malefactor, who labours under a raging mortiferous fever; which renders him senseless for the present, and incapable of living 'till the time of execution. Hence it is, we read *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*.

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And because grapes cannot grow on thorns, or figs on thistles, without regeneration no holiness. Therefore, he who is the faithful and true witness hath declared, and that with a verily, verily, *except a man be born of water and the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Whereby (as a pious commentator well expounds it) "our Saviour" taught Nicodemus, that the birth he spake of, was not natural but "spiritual, wrought in the soul by the spirit of God, whose working" *is like water, cleansing the soul from all sinful defilement.*" In a word, if God be pure, if Christ true, his redemption complete, and the joys of heaven spiritual; then is it necessary for man to be born again: and as soon shall the Almighty change the nature of things, reverse his irreversibile and eternal law, and revoke his irrevocable decree, as suffer an unregenerate man to enter the kingdom of heaven, or wear the crown of Glory.

And as to the doctrine of *assurance of Salvation*, however strange and presumptuous it may appear to a blind and carnal mind; and notwithstanding, there may be various degrees thereof: I think I may venture to say, it is a doctrine founded in the verity of the triune God, defended by eminent saints, and to all who feel in themselves the workings of the Spirit of adoption, a doctrine full of *godly* comfort. For to these, God, even the Father hath promised, *I will never leave them nor forsake them*; and not only promised, but confirmed it with the greatest oath, *that he will never fail them.* To these, God the Son also speaks, *The Father himself hath loved you.—Fear not, little flock, it is his good pleasure to give you the kingdom.—None shall be able to pluck you out of his hands.—*And of these, he plainly declares that none shall be able to deceive them, because *they are his sheep and hear his voice; he gives them eternal life.—None shall be able to pluck them out of his hands.—They shall never perish.* Yea, these are they whom God the Father hath given and drawn to the Son, and whom the Son will in no wise cast out. These are they, and not the world, for whom the Son hath made a particular prayer, *effectually shed his precious blood,* and to whom he is a *special* Saviour. These are they, who are *myssically* set down with him in heavenly places, for whom he *prevalently* intercedes above, and to whom he sends his blessed Spirit, *that he may abide with them forever.* These are they, in whose heart, God the Holy Ghost writes the divine laws, and puts divine fear, that they may not depart therefrom. These are they, whom he leads into truth, and love, and holiness. In short, these are they whom he makes a *willing* people, and *seals* unto the day of redemption. And if any, who *seem* to be of these, should depart from them,

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the beloved disciple John, who was well acquainted with the divine λόγος as clearly as language can express it, hath given us this plain and infallible reason, *they went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, or as some read it, surely, have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.* (1 John ii. 19.) i. e. they were not as St. Peter expresses it, *born again of that incorruptible seed, the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* Hence it is, that he exhorteth all professors in general, *to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure;* and the house of Israel in particular, *to know assuredly that Jesus is both Lord and Christ.* Of this assurance, did the evangelical prophet *Isaiah* testify, (chap. xlv. 24.) saying, *surely one shall say in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.* Of this also the apostle Paul, when writing to the saints at Philippi, *Being confident of this very thing, that he which had begun a good work in them, would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.* And again, in his epistle to the beloved at Rome; *He is persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature should be able to separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus.* Hence saith St. Bernard, “Propter hoc data sunt signa quædam manifestæ salutis, ut in-
“dubitabile sit, eum esse de numero electorum, in quo ea signa per-
“manferint. For this, certain evidences of manifest salvation are given
“that it might be undoubted, that he is of the number of the elect,
“in whom these signs are. And, as Augustine hath it, “Non ar-
“rogantia est sed fides, non superbia sed devotio, prædicare quod
“acceperis. ’Tis not arrogance, but faith; not pride, but devotion,
“to proclaim what (evidences) thou hast received.” Hence also, it
was that in latter times, Antoninus Marinarius, hearing that the
council of Trent, would not have a christian to be certainly persuaded
of his salvation, boldly cried out, “If heaven fall, if the earth vanish
“away, if the whole world run headlong; I will look to the good-
“ness of my God, and stand upright; and if an angel from heaven
“shall labour to persuade me otherwise, I will say Anathema to him.”
Hence also, that we may come still nearer to our own times, the wise
compilers of our Liturgy, scruple not to declare that true communicants,
“are assured of God’s favour and goodness towards them:” And that
“such (Art. 17.) will at length by God’s mercy, attain to ever-
“lasting felicity.” So that, so far, is the man who hath attained a de-
gree of this assurance, from being presumptuous, because he tells what
“God hath done for his soul, is always ready to give an answer to
any

"any one who shall ask him a reason of the hope that is in him," and dares glory of the feeling presence of the Spirit of Christ, that he only is the true believer and humble confessor. 'Tis he who knows, and therefore glorifies God, by believing his word, and trusting his faithfulness. 'Tis he who *humbly* renounces his own, and submits to the Righteousness of God. 'Tis he, who *surely*, and not *vainly*, cries out, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength. Whereas, on the contrary, he who knows not God, and hath no well-grounded evidence of his salvation; cannot truly believe, or heartily love and glorify him. He proudly establishes his own righteousness, and rejects the righteousness of God. His worship is only superstition, sin and idolatry; because it is only in his own will and spirit, and not in the spirit and truth of God. His denial of assurance of salvation in others, because *he* hath none; we may venture to say, arises from a composition of ignorance, pride and impudence: for to say there is none, must manifest his *ignorance* of the scriptures and of the power of God. But to contradict the truth of God, and give the lie to his children in all ages, because *he* hath no such assurance, is devilish *pride* indeed; and I think *an assurance* well nigh equal to consummate *impudence*. And if at any time he ignorantly and vainly cry out, "as I hope to be saved:" To use the words of a late pious and worthy divine, "He is only like a man who passing by a great house or estate, saith, that is mine: but being bid to shew his title, can only say, somebody must have it, and why not I?" How vain! How absurd! How presumptuous! How preposterous! Such a way of reasoning, let every reader judge.

The doctrines objected to, being, sir, I hope, clearly prov'd, I next proceed to consider what you have advanc'd against the manner wherein they are sometimes preach'd, the effects which you suppose flow therefrom, and what you would have substituted in their place. —And first, "they are sometimes preach'd extempore;" notwithstanding I readily grant, that reading may have its proper use: Yet that *reading* a sermon, and *preaching* a sermon, are terms synonymous; or that ἀναγνώσκω and κηρύσσω have the same etymology, I can by no means allow. For then the following reading of these scriptures, would not only be good divinity, but also excellent sense and English: In those days came John the baptist, *reading* in the wilderness of Judea (Matt. iii. 1.) And did *read* the baptism of repentance. (Acts xiii. 24.) Philip open'd his mouth and began at the same scripture, and *read* to the eunuch, Jesus. (Acts viii. 35.) We *read* not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. (1 Cor. iv. 5.) "How shall they

read except they be sent?" (*Rom. x. 15.*) But stop; methinks I hear one say, "thus to read the scriptures, is to make them neither sense nor english." True, and therefore to me 'tis quite plain, that in scripture language, *reading* and *preaching* are two things. However, that we may confirm this sound doctrine, by a right good example; let us walk into the synagogue at Nazareth, and there view the behaviour of one, who is the unerring Guide, and perfect pattern of all who are truly gospel-preachers: mark! he reads the text,—closes the book,—restores it to the minister,—opens his mouth, and so powerfully and pathetically preaches the acceptable year of the Lord, that the eyes of the auditory are fastned on him; yea, they all bear him witness, and wonder at the gracious words which proceed from his mouth. (*Luke iv.*) This example hath been copy'd by the apostles, follow'd by the Fathers and Reformers, and is worthy the imitation of all true preachers. Hence we find the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, at Jerusalem and Cæsarea, at Antioch and Athens, before Jews and Gentiles, people and rulers, the unlearned and Rabbies, Barbarians and Philosophers, in this extempore manner, publishing the Gospel of the kingdom of God. Hence also we find that* "St. Augustine thus freely preaching, and even once forgetting the very argument which he first propos'd, fell upon the errors of the Manichees, beside his first intention; by which discourse, he converted one Firmus his auditor, who fell down at his feet weeping, and confessing he had lived a Manichee many years." And what the judgment of our pious Reformers was in this particular, we may learn from their preface to an old and almost obsolete book, intitled, "Certain Sermons or Homilies, appointed to be read in churches, &c." There they tell us, "That since all they " which are appointed ministers, have not the gift of *preaching* (too " much the case in the present age) the queen's most excellent majesty, tendering the soul-health of her loving subjects, commandeth " and chargeth all parsons, &c. every Sunday and Holiday, to read and " declare to their parishoners, one of these Homilies, except there be " a sermon, and then for that cause only the *reading* of the said Homily or Sermon to be deferred." Here I think it is pretty plain, that by *preaching*, our Reformers understood something more than *reading*: otherwise, I suppose, they would not have enjoined, that *reading* a sermon should give place to *preaching* one. 'Tis true, this modernising age turns things topsy-turvy, and I grant, that many of our polite gentlemen would fain make us believe contrary to reason, scripture,

* Possilonius in vita Augustini, cap. 15. as quoted by Mr. Flavel in his Divine Conduct.

scripture, and antiquity, not only that *preaching* should give place to *reading*, but that *reading* is the only true and excellent *preaching*: just like a poor lame beggar, who having by the help of crutches, made a shift to hop about and get a tolerable living, takes it into his head, that he is a much sounder man than they who need none, and therefore can walk without; and if any one go about to reduce him to right reason, by shewing him that crutches are no part of a man, and that without them he cannot walk at all; the poor frantic cripple is so irritated, that except his friend look well about him, he will be in no small danger of receiving a blow from one of his crutches.

‘ But the aforefaid doctrines, are not only preached extempore, but sometimes also in the open air, and other unconsecrated places.’ To this I answer, the faithful, and the true Witness hath plainly informed us, “ that the time is even now come, when not at Jerusalem, nor yet in this mountain; but in Spirit and Truth, the “ true worshippers worship the Father.” And his apostle Paul hath declared, that *God who made the world, and all things therein, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.* And therefore he exhorts Timothy, *to preach the word, to be instant in season and out of season; and wills, that men should pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting.* Hence we find, that the great Bishop of souls, and his clergy, went about every where preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God; come, let us follow our blessed Redeemer into the fields: methinks I see him yonder sitting on a mountain: And lo! grace in his mein, heaven in his aspect, pity in his eyes, and in his every gesture, dignity, propriety, divinity and love. And who are his auditory? not his disciples merely, nor yet the souls of some particular parish, or peculiar district; but lo! the people, especially the (ὄχλος) common people, flock to him from every quarter. Oh! see them surrounding, his disciples attending, angels admiring, and the great Teacher of mankind about to open his mouth.—Hark! Now he speaks, and Oh! with what a gravity, majesty, and energy! His words drop as the rain, and distil as the dew; they fix the eye, ravish the ear, gladden the heart, sweeten the mouth, and with pearly tears bedew the face; they pour light on the mind, power to the will, and a heavenly warmth to the affections; in a word, they minister grace to the soul, and fill it with loving wonder; because he teaches with power and authority, and not in a cold, sleepy, reading inanner as do the scribes.—But lest this transcendently bright example should impair, instead of strengthen the weak sight of mortals; lest this matchless preacher should discourage, rather than excite our imi-

tation : Come, and see a man of like passions with us, sweetly copying his blessed Master.—You will guess whom I mean.—’Tis that glorious champion, that blessed apostle of the Lord of hosts, Paul of Tarsus.—See him yonder, standing and preaching on Mars hill, at Athens.—View him as he is beautifully and judiciously drawn by the celebrated *Raphael Urbin*, and exhibited amongst a choice and valuable collection of pictures, preserved in a repository of British princes.—Observe his attitude ! His every gesture seems to speak *impendam* and *expendar*. He hath no book, but in his countenance you may plainly read, godly zeal, pious concern, just revenge, holy indignation, self clearing, and vehement desire. His body something leaning, but unsupported, his nerves, arteries, arms extended, all declare him “no smooth emollient in theology, no recumbent downy doctor ;” but that his very soul and body was on the stretch for God and the good of souls : They all manifest that he was willing to impart, not the Gospel only, but even his own life also ; yea, they speak with a dumb but persuasive oratory, *Believe in Jesus, turn from idols and serve the living God*. And give me leave to tell you, that I never read, or even heard, that either the mount or Mars hill, had been before consecrated. However, now they were ; for as St. Augustine well observes, “*Locus non facit sanctos, sed operatio sancta et locum sanctificat et nos. Peccavit angelus in cœlo, peccavit Adam in paradiso, si locus hominem beare possit, nec homo, nec angelus dignitate sua corrumpissent*. It is not the place which makes men holy, but holy exercise sanctifies both the place and us. The angels sinned in heaven, Adam sinned in paradise ; if the place might have blessed the creature, neither men nor angel should have fallen from their dignity.”—Don’t mistake me, I have no objection to pulpits and churches. No, I praise the providence of our God, for the pious care of our ancestors, who have left us not only decent, but in some places, magnificent structures, furnished with elegant pulpits, when they can be had, I think, they are good convenient places, both for ministers and people : But as honest bishop *Latimer*, that pious reformer and glorious martyr, hath *planè et sanè* expressed it, when preaching before good king *Edward* and his nobles, upon our Saviour’s sermon from a boat. “It was (saith he) a goodly pulpit that our Saviour had gotten him here ; an old rotten boat, and yet he preached his Father’s will ; he cared not for the pulpit, so he might do the people good. Indeed it is to be commended for the preacher to stand or sit, as the place is ; but I would not have it so superstitiously esteemed, but that a good preacher may declare the word
“of

“ of God, sitting on a horse, or preaching in a tree. And though it
 “ be good to have the pulpit set up in churches, that the people might
 “ resort thither, yet I would not have it so superstitiously used, but that
 “ in a profane place, the word of God might be preached sometimes;
 “ and I would not have the people offended withal, no more than they
 “ be with our Saviour Christ’s preaching out of a boat: And yet to
 “ have pulpits, it is very well done to have them, but they would be
 “ well occupied, for it is a vain thing to have them as they stand in
 “ many churches.” So that according to the judgment of Christ and
 his apostles, fathers and reformers, extempore, and even field-preach-
 ing is not such a vile, shameful, and abominable thing as some of our
 squeamish modernizers of christianity have imagined.

And now, Sir, the *doctrines* objected to, being clearly proved;
 and the *manner* of publishing them, shewn to be neither antichristian,
 antiapostolical, or even contrary to the judgment of our most pious and
 zealous reformers: the ill consequences supposed to flow from thence,
 must of course, fall to the ground, or be ascribed to their proper au-
 thors; the world, the flesh and the devil: For, according to sound
 philosophy, and the express declaration of the divine λόγος and un-
 erring wisdom, *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can
 a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.*

With respect, Sir, to that cold, sleepy, immur’d* dead morality,
 which you would have substituted for these precious doctrines of Christ:
 A dispensation of the Gospel being committed to me, woe is me, if I
 should comply with your advice.—And as to the loss of curacy, pre-
 ferment, friends, goods, yea, and perhaps life itself: I have already
 made an estimate of the matter, and find them not worthy to be com-
 pared with truth, Christ, heaven, glory. Besides my blessed Master
 hath informed me, *that he who seeketh to save his life, shall lose it; and
 that he who will lose his life for his sake, shall find it.* Come, there-
 fore, whatsoever will come, I believe his Grace is sufficient for me:
 Let men and devils, as much as lieth in them, stop my mouth, my
 Christ can the more open it, as he hath for his prophets, apostles,
 martyrs, confessors: Let them cast me out of the synagogue, or even
 banish me to a desert island; he will find me, as he did the poor
 man, whose eyes he had opened; and teach and comfort me, as he
 did the beloved disciple in the isle of Patmos: Let them endeavour
 to starve me, he can cause the ravens, widows, angels, to feed me,
 as he did Elijah: Let them cast me into the lion’s den, or burning fiery
 furnace;

* That is seldom preached or practised but within walls.

furnace; the God of Daniel, and the three children will be with me: Let them imprison and strike my head off, as they did that of John the Baptist; my soul, mingling amongst the spirits of just men made perfect, shall be the more at liberty, and my dead dismembered body shall preach in the consciences of my most cruel and bitter enemies: Let the tumultuous mob, the incensed rabble, the bestial sons of Belial, (instigated by formal hypocrites and blind guides) disturb, stone, kill me; my Saviour can enable me with Stephen, to pray for my unhappy persecutors, whilst I see him standing at the right hand of his Father, ready to receive my spirit into the blissful mansions of eternal glory. And after my body hath been for many years interred, should the malice of superstitious bigots, or† faith-breaking Papists, dig up its remains, burn them into ashes, and scatter them in the river, as they did those of our countryman, Wickliffe, of blessed memory; he can thereby more effectually spread his glorious Gospel, raise up another Hufs, Jerome, Luther; and in the great day of God, collect all my scattered atoms, and change and fashion this mortal vile body like unto his glorious body.

In a word, Sir, if God be for me, what can hurt me? We know, saith an inspired apostle, *that all things work together for good to them who love God*. And, blessed be God, I know that I love him; therefore why should I be afraid? If your synagogue and pulpit, Sir, be shut, heaven is still open;—If you judge yourself and people unworthy of the word of eternal life, your blood be upon your own heads: The world is still before me, God's providence, word, and spirit, my unerring guides, and his children my friends and brethren. From hence then, I prefer the cross of Christ, and afflictions with his people, to worldly pleasures, friendships and preferments; henceforth, desiring, *by life and doctrine, to set forward the Salvation of all men*; I preach whensoever the Lord opens my mouth, and wheresoever he opens a door unto me.

In the mean time, that God of his infinite Mercy, may direct you, and the people called your parishioners, into his precious Truth, and blessed Love, is the sincere prayer of him, who by Grace, is still determined to be

CHRISTIANUS.

† The council of Constance, not only broke their faith with John Hufs, and Jerome of Prague, but also decreed that no faith is to be kept with Heretics,

To Mr. N. N.

S I R,

I have just read your address to me, intituled *Presbyters and Deacons, not commissioned to preach without the Bishop's Allowance*. And the Lord being my helper, I will, according to your desire, weigh and consider what you advance; but since truth is strong, and need not be afraid, why should we contend in the dark, as ashamed thereof? As you, Sir, ingenuously declare, that you are ready to retract an error, and rightly observe that it is no shame to acknowledge a mistake; freely, therefore, subscribe your name and come to the light; so may I, according to my sincere desire, give you your proper title and due respect. In the mean time permit me, unknown, Sir, to tell you, that

I am, for Christ's sake,

Your hearty Well-wisher,

And humble Servant,

JOHN GREEN.

*The Academy in Denmark-
Street, Jan. 14, 1762.*

F I N I S.

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